



The Insider

www.senate.mi.gov/switalski

Inside State Politics with State Senator Mickey Switalski Senate District 10

September 3, 2004

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Insider*. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and for giving me an opportunity to represent you in the Michigan Senate. It is my sincere hope that this bi-weekly e-newsletter will keep you informed of the happenings in Lansing while staying true to the traditional style of *The Insider*. If you would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me at senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov or call me at my Roseville or Lansing office. You can also meet me in person during my constituent hours, coming to a library near you. Call my office and make an appointment or just walk in. See schedule for details.

No Proof of Insurance Fees to come back

There is an old age that goes it is better to give than to receive. For many Michigan residents with a bad driving record, this may prove true to the detriment of their pocket book.

The Department of Treasury is sending out about 20,000 notices on behalf of the Secretary of State's office to drivers who were ticketed for failure to provide their proof of insurance during a traffic stop but did not go to court to prove that were insured at the time during the 60-day window the Michigan legislature provided.

In April, the Michigan legislature passed Public Act 52 of 2004 that allowed a 60-day grace period for drivers to provide valid proof of insurance prior to their scheduled court date. This act eliminated the \$300 driver's responsibility fee that would otherwise be assessed prior to June 30, 2004 under the Driver Responsibility Law.

The Driver Responsibility Law came into effect on October 1, 2003 and imposed a fee on drivers who are convicted of certain qualifying violations such as failure to provide a proof of insurance and for those drivers that have seven or more points. Public Act 52 was enacted as a result of many complaints from drivers who were given \$300 assessment fines for not having insurance when they actually did.

Drivers that received this letter in the mail are required to pay this fee within 30 days of the date of the letter. Drivers that do not pay or make arrangements for a payment schedule will have their driver's license suspended and will also be assessed a \$125 fee in order to restore their driving privileges. For more information on the Driver Responsibility Fees, please log on to www.michigan.gov/driverlaw.

Governor Looks to Higher Ed to Strengthen Michigan

It has become apparent in the last few years that the nation is moving toward a more knowledge-based and advanced technology-driven economy where higher education has become a critical component to the nation's economic growth and stability. The significant loss of manufacturing jobs in this state is a reflection of the changing economic times.

In Michigan, we have lagged behind as a state and the nation in the amount of college graduates that we produce. 22 percent of adults between the ages of 25-34 have a college degree in Michigan, which puts the state below the national average. Even more shocking is the fact that 49 percent of last year's college graduates in Michigan were pursuing jobs outside of this state.

Governor Granholm has raised concerns that if we do not increase the educational attainment of our workforce in Michigan, we will be unable to create jobs that the state needs in order to promote growth in our economy. As a result, Governor Granholm has appointed Lt. Governor John Cherry to head the Higher Education Commission. There are 40 other members on this commission which consists of a diverse group of numerous university and community college presidents, state lawmakers, state department directors and business leaders. Among the commission members is Macomb County Community College President, Dr. Albert Lorenzo.

The task of this newly appointed commission is to increase the amount of college graduates in Michigan. By making students aware that a college education and/or vocational training is vital to their future, Governor Granholm hopes that this commission will double the number of Michigan college graduates in Michigan over the next ten years making the state a national leader in producing college graduates, and secondly to ensure that Michigan's system of higher education furnishes citizens with the general and specific skills that are necessary to embrace the jobs of the 21st century.

This commission will also discuss five proposed Senate bills within the next few weeks, including a bill (SB 1154) which I introduced in April that would replace the MEAP test for high school students with a combination of the ACT and the ACT Work Keys tests

The Commission will begin public hearings on September 7 in Marquette and will continue through October 18 when the commission meets at a still undisclosed location in the Metro Detroit area. To learn more about this commission, please visit www.michigan.gov/lsgov. If you would like to learn more about SB 1154, please contact my office.

Mickey's TV Insider Show

Check out my TV Insider Show coming to a television station near you. Watch me interview local guests about politics, life, issues and concerns to our district.

Sterling Heights

Every Saturday and Sunday at 12:30 p.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Utica

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Clinton Township

Last week of every month- Sat thru Thurs
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Roseville

Every other Tuesday at 6:05 p.m.
(Comcast Channel 18)

*Please note that Sterling Heights/Utica/Clinton Township will show the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 5 and Wide Open West Channel 10. Clinton Township will air the TV Insider Show at various times during the last week of every month. Roseville can see the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 18.

Coffee Hours

*Please note that since the District Office is in Roseville, I do not have set coffee hours in Roseville. However, I encourage you to visit the Roseville office. We even have a coffee pot. Everyone is welcome to attend the coffee hours and discuss their issues and concerns.

Sept.13
7-9 p.m.

Location: Sterling Heights Public Library
(40255 Dodge Park)

Sept. 27
7-9 P.M.

Location: Clinton Township Public Library
(35891 South Gratiot, north of 15 Mile)

Contact My Office

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